

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated April 29, 2005, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims.

At the outset, it is noted that an Information Disclosure Statement, with the requisite fee, was filed on March 14, 2005. However, the Office Action does not contain an indication that the Examiner considered the reference submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement. It is respectfully requested that the next communication from the Patent Office confirm that the submitted reference has been considered, or provide an explanation of the reasons why it has not been considered.

All pending claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102, on the grounds that they were considered to be anticipated by the Rothermel et al. patent (US 6,678,827). It is respectfully submitted, however, that the Rothermel patent does not anticipate the claimed subject matter.

As set forth in M.P.E.P. §2131, "to anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim" (emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-36 does not meet this criterion.

For example, claim 1 recites a method for automatically provisioning a plurality of computing devices. The claimed method includes, among other steps, that of "expanding at least one template *at a central location*" (emphasis added). The claim further recites the step of "providing the expanded information to said plurality of computing devices."

In rejecting this claim, the Office Action refers to the Rothermel patent at column 4, line 49, through column 5, line 13. It appears that the disclosure in the

Rothermel patent, relating to the replacement of aliases in the template copy on a particular NSD with information about specific corresponding devices that are protected by the NSD, is being interpreted to correspond to the claimed step of "expanding at least one template." However, the patent does not disclose that this replacement process occurs "at a central location," nor that the result of the replacement is provided "to" the NSD. Rather, as set forth in column 5, lines 1-3, a copy of the template is *first* provided to each of the NSDs. The patent goes on to state that "Each of the NSD template copies can *then* be configured with NSD-specific information... In particular, aliases in the template copy *on a particular NSD* can be replaced with information about the specific corresponding devices that are protected by the NSD...." (emphasis added).

Thus, it can be seen that the Rothermel patent teaches that the templates, *per se*, are first sent to the NSD, and thereafter, the templates at the individual NSDs are configured to replace the aliases with the NSD-specific information. As such, the replacement operation does not occur "at a central location," as recited in claim 1. Nor does the Rothermel patent teach that expanded information, e.g. a template with the aliases replaced by the NSD-specific information, is provided *to* the NSD. Rather, the template with the aliases, i.e. without the specific information, is provided to the NSD.

For at least these reasons, therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the Rothermel patent does not anticipate the subject matter of claim 1.

For similar reasons, claims 8 and 22 are not anticipated. Claim 8 recites a communications gateway through which communication messages are exchanged between agents on the respective computing devices and a database system.

Among other functions, this communications gateway expands retrieved templates to create respective documents containing combined template information and expanded information, and provides these documents to the plurality of agents. In other words, the expansion of the template takes place at the communications gateway, and the result of the expansion, namely the document, is then provided to the agents. From the foregoing discussion of claim 1, it can be appreciated that the Rothermel patent does not disclose a communications gateway that functions in such a manner to first create a document containing combined template information and expanded information, and then provide such a document to the NSDs. For similar reasons, the method of claim 22 is not disclosed by the Rothermel patent.

Claim 31 recites a method for controlling user access to networked computing devices that includes storing a plurality of templates, at least one of which includes a conditional statement. The claim recites the additional step of retrieving a template that pertains to a given one of the devices, and creating a document comprising a listing of users identified in the template and "users identified in any conditional statement if said given device meets the condition." The Office Action does not contain a specific rejection of claim 31, but merely references the rejection of claims 1-21. While none of claims 1-21 contains the same recitations as claims 31, the rejection of claims 21 appears to be most pertinent, since that claim also relates to the manner in which conditional statements in a template are handled. The rejection of claim 21 refers to the Rothermel patent at column 11, lines 18-30. Applicant is unable to find any teaching in this portion of the patent that relates to a conditional statement in a template. More particularly, there is no teaching that a document created from a template include a listing of users identify in a conditional statement if

a given device, e.g. an NSD, meets the condition of the statement. If the rejection of claim 31 is not withdrawn, the Examiner is requested to explain how the Rothermel patent is being interpreted to anticipate the subject matter of this claim.

In addition to the foregoing distinctions, other differences between the claimed invention and the disclosure of the Rothermel patent are set forth in the dependent claims. However, a detailed discussion of those other differences are believed to be unnecessary at this time, in view of the foregoing.

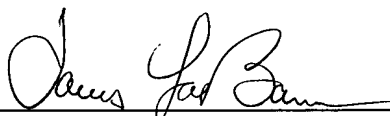
Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 31, 2005

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